

LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **April 9, 2002**

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

CONSENT:

REGULAR: **X**

CLOSED SESSION:

(Confidential)

ACTION:

INFORMATION:

ITEM TITLE: **Virginia Initiative for Employment – Not Welfare (VIEW)**

RECOMMENDATION: Approve transfer of funding for eight restricted positions from the VIEW budget to Social Services budget.

SUMMARY: The Virginia Department of Social Services has changed the guidelines for use of the VIEW funding to a more restrictive definition for the expenditure of the funds. Now, any employee paid from VIEW funding must be totally dedicated to serving VIEW participants. As a result, the funding method for eight positions not totally VIEW dedicated must be modified.

The transfer of these positions reduced the reimbursement for these positions from 100% to 80%. The total cost of these positions is \$228,880. An appropriation transfer will be submitted to the Department of Financial Services and Budget to move the \$183,457 from the VIEW Administrative budget to the Social Services Administrative budget.

The \$45,423 local cost for these positions has been identified within the regular Social Services FY 2002 program budget. This was possible due to decreased demands in the three program areas of General Relief, Auxiliary Grants and Adult Day Care.

The change of these positions from VIEW to the regular Social Services budget has been incorporated into Social Services FY 2003 proposed budget.

The eight positions are essential to the provision of mandated services for the Department of Social Services. The four Benefit Programs Services Aides and two Screeners are important in expediting the client case flow and assignments. These six positions also provide a structure that greatly enhances case accuracy. Two Customer Services Associates provide records management, mail management, reception and telephone operator assistance to the entirety of the workforce. (Please see attachments A and B)

PRIOR ACTION(S): April 2, 2002 Finance and Planning Committee

FISCAL IMPACT: The transfer of these positions reduced the reimbursement for these positions from 100% in VIEW to 80% in Social Services Administrative Budget. The total cost of these positions is \$228,880. Resources of \$131,761 (State/Federal) are available from the Virginia Department of Social Services; \$51,696 (Other) is available from Region 2000 Commission Welfare to Work Project; and \$45,423 (Local) is available in the FY 2002 Social Services Programs budget.

The eight positions will transfer from the VIEW administrative budget to the regular Social Services administrative budget.

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ATTACHMENT(S): (1) Resolution (2) Attachments A and B

REVIEWED BY:

Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED That \$183,457 is transferred from the Virginia Initiative for Employment – Not Welfare (VIEW) administrative budget to the Social Services administrative budget for FY 2002; also that \$45,423 is transferred from the Social Services program budget to the Social Services administrative budget for FY 2002. Total resources available are \$131,761 from the Virginia Department of Social Services, \$51,696 from Region 2000 Commission Welfare to Work Project, and \$45,423 is from the fiscal year 2002 Social Services programs budget.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That eight (8) positions are transferred from the VIEW budget to the Social Services administrative budget.

Adopted:

Certified:

Clerk of Council

085L

Impact

The Benefit Programs Unit cannot ensure that citizens will receive timely, accurate benefits in the event it sustains this 17% reduction in its staff.

The four Benefit Programs Aides provide critical services to the Benefit Programs Specialists and to the citizens. The Benefit Programs Aides interview citizens to assist in determining continued eligibility for benefits, assist them with paperwork, and communicate with them over the phone and in person. The Benefit Programs Specialists rely on the Benefit Programs Aides to assist them in efficiently managing their complex caseloads in order to meet mandated timelines for eligibility determination.

The two Benefit Programs Screeners review the applications with the citizens and if necessary, assist them in completing the application. The work of the Screeners ensures the following:

- citizens are applying for benefits in the correct locality
- citizens apply for all appropriate benefits
- citizens eligible for expedited services are promptly served
- citizens ineligible for benefits are notified by the Screener during the initial point of contact

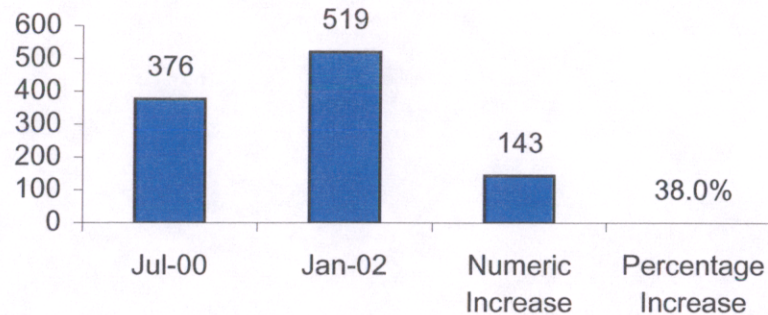
The Customer Service Unit will sustain a 20% reduction in its staff with the loss of these positions. This Unit manages the two reception windows, the multi-line switchboard, the mail operation and the records room operation for 150+ employees of the Human Services facility. **The remaining Unit staff will not have the capacity to manage these daily functions at our current location. The impact of the loss will be more significant when staff relocates to the new facility at 822 Commerce Street where services will be provided in a multi-story facility.**

As Welfare Reform moved forward, caseloads in TANF decreased rapidly from a high of over 1,110 to a low of 335 in September 2000. Caseloads in the two other major eligibility program areas, Food Stamps and Medicaid, remained relatively constant over this period of time. **Subsequent to September 2000, TANF caseloads have increased considerably, as have the Food Stamp and Medicaid caseloads. (Please see Attachment B)**

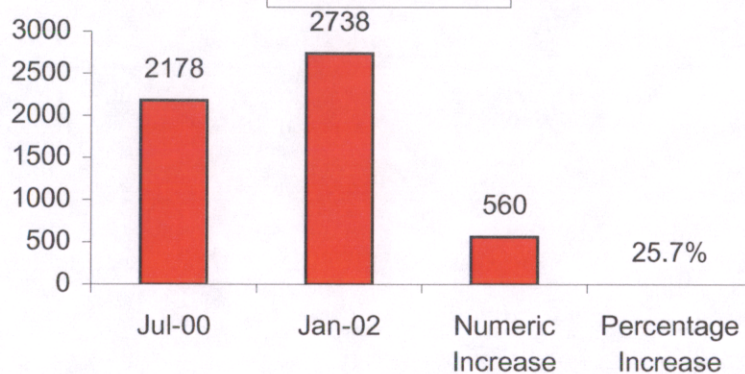
The loss of these eight positions would have a negative impact on our ability to provide legally mandated services to the less fortunate citizens of our community.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE CASE COMPARISON JULY 2000/JANUARY 2002

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE TO NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)



FOOD STAMPS



MEDICAID

